

9 September 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: All NIOs

SUBJECT : DCI Warning Assessments

1. The DCI has directed the NIC to develop a new series of monthly warning assessments that will be disseminated to the Washington policy community and US missions abroad. This product will carry the DCI's authority and represent his appraisal of the warning outlook over a period of 60 to 90 days. It will not be coordinated with other NFIB agencies.
2. The DCI has emphasized that these assessments should be projective, focusing on the purposes and intentions of foreign actors, on alternative outcomes, and on the evidence at hand and that needed to assess probabilities. Assessments will explore potential and actual warning situations in greater depth and detail than is feasible in either the DCI Watch Committee Reports or the NIO monthly warning reports.
3. The new series will be highly selective--perhaps averaging six items a month--and will address only those potential developments of major consequence for US political, security and economic interests. The emphasis on selectivity and on projections of alternative outcomes will distinguish this product from standard "global" intelligence briefings. It will be assumed that consumers are well briefed on current intelligence information and events. The objective will be to provide the earliest possible warning of potential surprise and of significant actions that may affect US interests.
4. Assessments will be based on intelligence reporting to the extent possible, but projections of alternative outcomes and probability judgments will necessarily require speculation, particularly in the early stages of a potential or developing warning situation. Assessments will reflect the personal judgment of NIOs and should not be limited to consensus views of their community specialists. On occasion, they should take note of divergent analyses or minority views within the community. They also should cite particularly cogent field appraisals from embassies or stations or from foreign intelligence services and foreign ministries when these views depart from the prevailing consensus in Washington. Assessments will include, where appropriate, recommendations for additional field reporting.

Procedures

5. At the end of the third week of each month, NIOs will submit drafts of proposed items to the Chairman, NIC. The NIO/W staff will make independent recommendations. The C/NIC will select those items to be included in the warning assessment and will consult with the appropriate NIOs in preparing final drafts in the last week of the month. Draft assessments will be reviewed in the DCI's meetings with the NIOs at the end of the month. The amended text that emerges from this review will then be disseminated.

6. The DCI has requested that a mock-up warning assessment be prepared as soon as possible.

In view of the DCI's

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absence from headquarters for two weeks beginning 18 September, we should have this rock-up ready by 17 September. NIOs therefore are requested to submit drafts of proposed items to the C/VIC by COB 15 September, following the guidelines in paragraphs 2-4 above.

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